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Pathways to Membership: Socialization to Work*

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Pathways to Membership: Socialization to Work*

John Van Maanen M. I. T.

This chapter addresses selected aspects of what is rapidly becoming an almost universal process in Western societies, organizational socialization. The focus is the occupational milieu a young person enters into on a full-time basis after having more or less completed a period of formal schooling at the secondary or post-secondary level. In temporal terms, the everyday work setting can perhaps only be challenged by the family environment as the locus of adult behavior. For most people, work is far more than forty hours out of their week, it represents a routinized pattern of thought and action that at least partially determines one's way of life. It is hardly an exaggeration to suggest that the work one does and where they do it exercises significant influence over the choices one makes concerning where one will live, with whom one will associate, what one will consider important, and even what one will become. Everett Hughes's (1958) often quoted remark makes this point well: "A man's work is as good a clue as any to the cause of his life, his social being and his identity."

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In general, social theorists have designated the social and psychological adjustments of individuals to their work settings as occupational socialization (Moore, 1969). Yet, the historical facts of modern life suggest that we live in an "employee society." In 1970, for example, almost 90 percent of the labor force in the United States were employed by organizations and this percentage has been steadily on the increase for the last century (Tausky, 1975). Throughout this chapter, the term organizational socialization will be preferred to the term occupational socialization because it directs attention to the dominant setting in which the process occurs. Although the two socialization processes are obviously interdependent, the position taken here is that the characteristics of the socialization setting are far more crucial to the eventual outcomes of the process than are the specific occupational attributes to be inculcated.

Organizational socialization refers to the way in which people learn the values, norms, and required behaviors necessary to function as a member of an organization. It deals therefore with the manner in which individuals are processed in organizations such that they are able to distinguish appropriate from inappropriate conduct, good from bad performance, acceptable from unacceptable action, and so forth. Organizational socialization involves therefore the learning of a specific work culture and is conceptualized here primarily in social or informational terms, not individual or behavioral ones. This is merely to say that I am

more concerned in this essay with the various forms of organizational socialization rather than the distinctive raw materials that fill these forms. My central assumption is simply that people are differentially socialized not only because people are different but also, and perhaps of far more importance, because organizational processes differ.¹

There are several advantages of viewing organizational socialization in this fashion. First, it emphasizes the socially acquired and shared information available to all or at least most organizational members as opposed to the individual and, at times, idiosyncratic beliefs held by different organizational members. Socialization can be seen then from a more general or collective perspective than would otherwise be the case. Second, it directs relatively greater attention toward the agents or senders of the organizational culture than to the recruits or receivers. This helps to correct what some observers have called a "recipient bias" in the study of social influence (Mills, 1959; Van Maanen, 1976; Mortimer and Simmons, 1978). Third, a focus on organizational culture necessarily generates concern for the way information is transmitted from one generation of organizational participants to the next. Thus organizational stability (or instability) can be viewed, at least partially, as a product of the specific socialization practices utilized by individuals and groups within the organization. Finally, the

informational or cultural approach suggests that socialization is not a discrete process that occurs once and for all at a particular period but is a continuous process that occurs throughout an individual's career within an organization. Indeed, from entry to exit, a person's career within an organization represents a series of transitions from one position or social role to another and any given transition may demand relatively mild to severe adjustments on the individual's part.² But, it is also the case that socialization is most obvious and perhaps most telling when one first joins an organization -- the outsider to insider passage. It is during the period of initiation into an organizational role wherein most learning is likely to occur and, as such this period is also likely to be more lively, exciting and uncomfortable for the individual than during other transition periods.³

On Learning to Work

Moving into the workplace for the first time requires the learning of a new social role. It implies that one may not only learn new attitudes, values, and behaviors but also that one may be forced to relinquish old ones as well. Such learning and unlearning is what Schein (1968) refers to as "the price of membership." The transition into the workplace therefore puts an individual in a situation of some anxiety which can only be reduced by learning the functional and social requirements of the new role as quickly as possible.⁴ This learning does not of course

occur in a social vacuum strictly on the basis of the official or administrative versions of what is required in the new role. Any person crossing the membership boundry into the organization is particularly vulnerable to clues on how to proceed that originate in the interactional zone that surrounds them. Thus, colleagues, superiors, subordinates, clients, friends, relatives, and other associates support and guide the individual who is learning a work role. They help interpret the events the person experiences such that the person can eventually take action in the new situation and, ultimately, they provide the person with a sense of accomplishment and competence (or failure and incompetence).

The view taken in this chapter is that when one moves into the work world for the first time there is likely to be at least some surprise or what Hughes (1958) calls "reality shock" in store for the individual. When persons undergo such a transition, regardless of the information they already possess about the to-be-assumed work, their a priori understanding of that role will undoubtedly change in either a subtle or dramatic fashion. As William James observed long ago, "knowledge about" and "knowledge of" a phenomena imply quite different levels of meaning. No matter how well prepared an individual may be educationally or by virtue of family experience, becoming a full-time member of a work organization will upset one's everyday order of things. Matters concerning friendship, time, purpose, demeanor, competence, self-image, personal values, and so forth are suddenly made

problaratic. The individual must build a set of guidelines to explain and make meaningful the myraid of activities observed to be going on in the work setting. To come to know an organization and act within it implies that a person has developed some rules, principles, and understandings for interpreting the various personal experiences that are associated with participating in a given sphere of work.

A useful way of considering this problem is to analyze the manner in which people build a perspective or, more specifically, a situational definition to order their view of the work world. In everyday life, to have defined a situation means that the social actor has developed certain notions regarding the role he or she is to enact in that situation. To define a situation is to be able to say the one "knows" what is going on around one's self. In a sense, situational definitions represent commonsense theories about particular and recurrent occasions such that the person can construct certain lines of action according to what he or she considers to be proper for such occasions.⁵

The specific content of situational definitions learned during a period of organizational socialization can be analytically broken down in terms of its sociotemporal properties.⁶ This is merely to say that in order for people to take meaningful action in the workplace, they must first be able to say where they are presently located, where they wish to go, and how they plan to get there. And, in order to make such strategic choices, a situational

definition is required to inform the individual as to the social space within which they must act as well as the social time deemed appropriate for such actions to take place. First, consider social space.

In any interactional setting, participants have respective parts of roles to play. When moving in and out of the various interpersonal segments of an organization, the parts people play represent the segments of the social structure that newcomers must cognitively organize or map if they are to fully participate as members of the organization.⁷ Once mapped these parts or roles provide guidelines for individual action and expectation such that the individual gains at least some idea of the behavior that is representative of other persons in the setting and also some idea of the behavior that others in the setting would be likely to interpret as going beyond the pale. For instance, when two previously unacquainted individuals come together to conduct business, pass the time, or, more generally, enter into some exchange that requires the give and take of joint activity, both must infer whether or not the other's appearance, gestures, and utterances are typical of some other group or category of persons with which each has previously had some experience (real or vicarious). Once the other is typed, then a collection of more or less appropriate responses can be marshalled out by the participants to order the interaction. This allows a role for the other to emerge as well as providing one's self with a proper role to play.

To construct a situational definition means, in part, that one can normalize the situation such that it becomes seen as a situation of a certain kind. For example, when one answers a knock on the door and discovers a stranger on their porch, they are typically ill at ease, uncomfortable, and unsure of how to act until they can type the stranger as being of a certain kind -- a salesperson, a pollster, a religious emissary, or perhaps a passing motorist in trouble. Normalizing the situation allows a culturally clear frame of reference to be built around it. And, within such a frame, people can more or less predict how another should act and correspondingly how they should act. To have normalized a situation means also that since the person can sense an order behind an appearance, the individual will be able to detect occurrences which fall outside normal patterns. Boundaries for appropriate behavior can then be said to exist. The learning of these behavioral boundaries is therefore a central task for the individual when first entering a work organization.

A good example in this regard is found in David Sudnow's (1965) classic study of the situational definitions used by public defenders to order their work lives. In brief, Sudnow found that within the organizational culture of a particular public defender's office, all crimes were classified by PDs into "typical" and "atypical" categories. Roughly 80 percent of the case load was comprised of the normal variety involving low-status defendants, crimes against property, no violence associated

with the commission of the crime, and so on. The cases which fell under this interpretive frame of reference were then handled routinely with all PDs following a learned but familiar and rather mundane plea-bargaining recipe. These "normal crimes" were not so much worked as they were processed according to a pre-existing, largely taken-for-granted plan. Actions taken by the PDs on cases falling outside the normality structure were, however, far less predictable. Each PD seemed to handle them in his or her own highly individualized fashion indicating that the situational definitions associated with the atypical cases were constructed idiosyncratically, based presumably upon whatever merits or demerits could be read into or gleaned from a particular case by a particular public defender.

What this example highlights beyond the normalization procedures individuals learn during the early stages of their organizational careers is the fact that their learned work perspectives have also a probabilistic dimension built into them. To classify something as typical or normal is to suggest that the person has learned to have a particular expectation in mind.⁸ It suggests too that individuals assess the probability of an event as they do the event's normality and that this assessment enters into the definition of the situation as well. Thus, a manager observed to be in the office typing a letter may well be atypical yet still perfectly normal if it can be determined that the person is typing as a result of a temporary shortage of clerical personnel. The occurrence may be rare but nonetheless it is to be expected under the circumstances. Normalization implies there-

fore that the individual has at least some idea of the "why" that lies behind an observed pattern of action, an idea grounded of course within the specific organizational culture of which the individual is a member. Situational definitions carry with them, then, everyday theoretical notions. In other words, to define a situation is to also be able to assign certain rudimentary cause-effect understandings to the situation's occurrence.

Motivational schemes ascribed to persons are, from this perspective, rather ^{popular} explanatory devices. Rightly or wrongly, they allow persons to make meaningful that which surrounds them. For example, most rookie policemen soon learn that among their colleagues in the organization are those characterized as "cabbages," devoid of drive or ambition, who seem to want nothing at all to do with the work involved in police work (Van Maanen, 1978a). "Cabbages" are seen as those officers who wish to maximize their personal safety, their economic security, their blemish-free service record. Similarly, in industrial settings, new foremen must contend with workers whom they learn to see as "trouble-makers" or "attitude problems." Such types are seen to contaminate the otherwise "good workers," thus slowdowns, horseplay, absenteeism, and sometimes outright sabotage can then be "understood" by the new foreman and assigned casual root.

Aside from learning the normal forms that are associated with one's involvement in a particular work setting, a newcomer must also develop some idea how time is to be viewed within the setting. To a novice, time is most problematic. One must

discover: when to take a break, have lunch, quit work, when to arrive each day, read the paper (if ever), how long one must stay at a certain pay grade, when to ask the boss a question, and so on. The temporal framework an individual eventually adopts provides both short-range timetables (which divide up the days and weeks into manageable components) and long-range ones (which provide notions of how one's work career may unfold). From this standpoint, the present is rendered understandable only in terms of where one has been and where one wants to go. Work perspectives or situational definitions that allow one to function effectively in the immediate moment must, therefore, provide for some continuity between the past and the future. The hard working, upwardly mobile student of law must believe, for example, that something is "out there" and is worth looking toward and preparing for if the immediate experiences of being a student are to be meaningful.

The term theme is used here to denote that aspect of situational definitions that an individual uses to link the past, present, and future (Van Maanen, 1977a). A theme generates an evaluation of present activity not by interpreting the immediate moment itself but by interpreting the immediate moment's relation to the past and the future. It joins the experienced past and anticipated future together whether or not that past and future are only seconds apart or years apart. A theme in the workplace might be that one has an "interesting, challenging job with good prospects," or, conversely, that one has a "dull, routine job with few prospects." Both themes postulate a pattern to one's activities in the work world and can be used to guide one's activities.

Themes can, of course, be realistic (in the sense that they are continuously being experienced and documented) or fantastic (in the sense that they are never being experienced and documented). But, the critical point here is simply that themes are necessary components of an actor's situational definition.

A theme serves largely to place the present within a normalized stream of life events. What occurs when one fails to document as expected a given theme is surprise. And surprise entails at least a momentary unhinging of the person from his or her constructed situational definition. The present becomes problematic because the future is hazy and the results of one's actions are undeterminable. Themes therefore are testable in the sense that a timetable for events can partially be constructed such that the person can more or less tell if a given theme is being fulfilled or not. If, for example, a young man defines his employment with a certain firm as "promising" this theme surely embodies notions of "moving up" in the firm quickly or being swiftly given more significant tasks to perform than those initially assigned. Conceivably, the test of this theme might be the number of different assignments the young man receives during the first year or two of work in the firm. If the assignments are many, the "promising" theme may hold and become further embellished. If the assignments are few, the "promising" theme will no doubt fade and be replaced by something less desirable. Themes and their timetables are, like all reality generating equipment,

subject to the sudden twists of benevolent or malevolent fate.

As the above example suggests, the individual's real or imagined control over his or her fate must also be considered a temporal characteristic of a given situational definition in the workplace. This feature refers to the person's perceived ownership of the work there. Work situations will of course vary as to the degree to which persons can, by their own efforts, create and sustain a theme. Civil service bureaucracies, for example, exert almost monopolistic control over the career themes of employees providing rather explicit sets of stipulations regarding and regulating an individual's progress (or lack thereof) within the organization. Similarly, contracts and agreements provide narrow limits within which a union member can carve out an everyday work theme. In both cases, themes are most certainly present and are perhaps quite specific though the individual is unlikely to have had much to do with the authoring of the theme. While thematic revisions may occur, they are perhaps attributable less to individual efforts than to environmental conditions -- the person being only a miniscule cog caught up in a situation he or she had nothing to do with defining. Ownership, then, is akin to the causal structure a person attributes to the temporal situation.

Summarily, situational definitions provide an individual with a practical theory and perspective for "what's going on" in the workplace. Such a theory includes notions of what typically occurs in the work setting (normality) and when it should occur (themes).

Furthermore, the probability of an event's occurrence in the situation is tied to its normality structure in roughly the same way as an event's timetable tests a particular theme. Situational definitions also include beliefs regarding why things occur as they do (causality) and the amount of control people believe they have over these things (ownership). In short, situational definitions provide the rules by which one can manage the unique and reoccurring strains of organizational life. They provide the person with a perspective on the organization that runs ahead and directs experience, orders and shapes personal relationships within the work setting, and provides the ground rule under which everyday affairs can be managed.⁹

The analysis presented in the following section explores the learning of situational definitions in the work setting from primarily an external or structural standpoint. The discussion therefore moves beyond individual concerns or what it is specifically that the recruit learns during the non-member to member transition period and considers the manner in which such learning takes place. A concern for the structural properties of work socialization is critical because, as it is argued below, an individual's perspective on the work he or she performs is shaped in rather predictable ways depending upon how the experiences of the newcomer are organizationally patterned. Though a few exceptions are almost always the rule, the particular shaping process may produce recruits that act in ways remarkably similar to one another or act in ways

altogether dissimilar. That this shaping occurs more from design than drift is a point underlying the remainder of this chapter.¹⁰

Strategies of Organizational Socialization

The title phrase, "pathways to membership," refers to the strategic ways in which the initial experiences of a newcomer to an organization are structured for him or her by others within that organization. These tactics may be selected "planfully" by management with some particular objective in mind such as the requirement that all recruits attend a training or orientation program of some kind. Or, they may be selected "naturally" by management with no particular objective in mind, representing merely precedents established in the traditional but dim past of an organization's history such as the proverbial "sink or swim" method of socialization by which it is said a person learns how to perform the work role on their own. Regardless of the basis of choice, however, any given strategy represents a distinguishable set of events occurring to the individual in transition which make certain behavioral and attitudinal consequences more likely than others. It is possible therefore to denote the various socialization strategies used in work organizations and then explore the differential results of their use upon the people to whom they are directed.

As denoted below, there are at least seven major strategic dimensions available to characterize the structural side of organizational socialization. I do not assert however that this list is in any way exhaustive or that the processes are presented in any order of relevance to a particular organization or occupation. These are essentially empirical questions that can only be answered by further research. I do assert and attempt to demonstrate however that these strategies are quite common and of consequence to the people passing through a socialization sequence. My reasons for choosing the particular strategies depicted below are simply the visible presence (or omnipresence) of the strategy across what appears to be a wide variety of organizations as well as the seeming importance and power of that strategy upon the persons who are subjected to it. Moreover, each listed strategy is not mutually exclusive of the others. Indeed, they are typically combined in sundry and often inventive ways. The effects of the strategies upon people are consequently cumulative. While I discuss each tactic in relative isolation, the reader should be aware that a recruit to an organizational position encounters all the listed strategies simultaneously. Finally, each strategy is presented below alongside its counterpart or opposing strategy. In practice, each strategy can be thought of then as located somewhere on a continuum where there is often a great deal of range between the two poles.¹¹

1. Formal (Informal) Socialization Processes:

The formality of a socialization setting refers to the degree to which the setting is segregated from the on-going work context (Brim, 1966; Wheeler, 1966; Cogswell, 1967). Is the role of the recruit specified or unspecified? In a formal setting, the recruit's role as a recruit is given -- differentiating in an official fashion the recruit from others in the setting. If the recruit's role is left unspecified, much learning takes place via the informal social and task-related networks. Thus, informal socialization procedures are analytically similar to the familiar trial and error techniques by which one learns through experience.

Generally, the more formal the setting, the more stress there is upon influencing the person's beliefs and values. In most formal settings, agents are concerned primarily with the recruit's absorption of the appropriate demeanor and stance associated with the target role -- that one begins to think and feel like a U.S. Marine or flight attendant or parish priest. In Bidwell's (1962) terms, formal settings emphasize "status socialization" (i.e. preparing the recruit to occupy a particular position) and informal settings emphasize "role socialization" (i.e. preparing the recruit to perform a specified task). Under most circumstances, the greater the separation of the recruit from the work-a-day realities involved in a particular line of work, the less the newcomer will be able to carry over and generalize any abilities or skills learned in a socialization setting to the workplace. And, therefore, formal processes concentrate, implicitly, if not

explicitly, more upon attitude than act.¹² For example, police recruits, sales trainees, and student nurses commonly denounce their formal training experiences as irrelevant, abstract and dull. Paradoxically, they are also expressing at the same time an attraction for components of the valued organizational ethos such as autonomy, pragmatism, and personal independence (Van Maanen, 1974).

Critically, formal processes almost always stress the "proper" or "right" way of behaving in lieu of the "practical" or "smart" way perhaps followed by the more experienced members in the organization. For example, many employees misrepresent their overtime statements or expense allowances; budget makers often pad their budgets with either fictitious expenses or exaggerated amounts for a given item; and supervisors almost invariably rate the performance of their subordinates as being far superior than is actually the case. All these are examples of how ideal organizational rules and policies are commonly broken.¹³ Formal socialization processes convey primarily the ideal version of organizational practices, rarely do they convey what, in reality, may be the case. The padded budget, for example, is, in many organizations, a normal and expected tactic, almost a standard operating procedure. So standard is the practice that those responsible for funds have developed the counterstrategy of lopping off a certain percentage of a requested budget on the grounds that the lesser amount better mirrors the actual needs of the budget maker than the original budget. Moreover, the member who strictly adheres to the correct practices (the proper) rather than the currently

acceptable social practices (the smart) is likely to be considered by others in the organization to be a "Schlaribel" or "Schruck" (one who has not been socialized fully). Thus, the budget maker who presents a budget that accurately reflects the needs of his group or department is then a Schruck: his activities may harm his own group and, in the long run, may create havoc in the total system. The Schruck's budget-- like those of other budget makers-- gets cut by the regular percentage, and, as a result, his group can not function in its accustomed fashion.

From this standpoint, formal socialization processes may be viewed tentatively as a "first wave" of socialization. The informal "second wave" occurs when the newcomer is actually placed in his designated organizational slot and must then learn the actual practices which go on there (Inkeles, 1966). Whereas the first wave stresses general skills and attitudes, the second wave emphasizes specified actions, situational applications of the rules, and the idiosyncratic nuances necessary to perform the role in the work setting. However, when the gap separating the two sorts of learning is rather large, disillusionment with the first wave may set in causing the individual to disregard virtually everything he has learned in the formal wave of socialization.

Looking to the individual in transition, formal strategies appear to produce stress in the form of a sort of Goffmanesque period of personal stigmatization. Whether or not this stigmatization takes

takes the form of identifying garb (such as the peculiar uniform worn by police recruits); a special and usually somewhat demeaning title (such as "rookie", "trainee", or "junior"); or insular position (such as an assignment to a classroom instead of an office or job); a person undergoing formal socialization is likely to feel isolated, cut-off, and prohibited from assuming the everyday kinds of social relationships with his more experienced organizational "betters". Furthermore, formal processes seldom use evaluations of an individual's performance in an advisory or diagnostic manner which would assist the person in discovering areas in need of improvement. Rather, they often use the results to make decisions bearing on the individual's future. Needless to say, if the performance evaluations have fateful consequences, people will orient their efforts solely toward getting good ones. And, if the evaluations are not perfectly matched to the occupational situation the person is being trained to face on the job, the individual must divert time and effort from what he should be learning to what is required in order to receive a good evaluation.

Informal socialization process, wherein a recruit must settle in to the work environment in a far less programmed way than is promoted by formal processes, can induce personal anxiety as well. To wit, the individual may well have trouble discovering clues as to the where, what, when and how of his assigned organizational role. Under most circumstances, laissez-faire socialization increases the influence upon the individual of the immediate

work group. There is no guarantee, though, the direction provided by the informal approach will push the recruit in the direction desired and favored by those in authority within the organization (Poy, 1952).

Left to their devices, recruits select their own agents. The success of the socialization process is then determined largely on the basis of mutual regard between recruit and agent, the relevant knowledge possessed by an agent, the recruit's abilities to learn, and, of course, an agent's ability to transfer such knowledge.

In most graduate schools, for example, students must seek out their own advisors. The advisor acts both as philosopher, guide, and friend, advising and supporting as well as evaluating the student. However, the relationship hinges essentially on the student's initiative. And in universities -- as is true in other organizations which train would-be members in similar ways -- it is felt by the faculty that the student who pushes hardest by demanding more time and asking more questions learns the most. The freedom of choice afforded the recruit in the more informal settings has consequently a price. From the recruit's perspective, he must force others in the setting to teach him.

When a subject matter or skill is thought too complex to be learned by a recruit in a haphazard, ordinary way, it is divided up and organized such that it can be formally presented. Schools or training programs are set up by the organization.

Full-time teachers are often employed, a curriculum is adopted, and so on. Associated with this approach is, of course, the educational ideology which suggests that the learner must first master certain "basics" before an understanding of the more complicated features of the subject or skill can be achieved. In the abstract, a curriculum could be tailor-made for each learner. In practice, however, the curriculum is typically standardized for reasons of economy and scheduling. Furthermore, the curriculum is premised upon a conception of just how the "normal" person can best learn the material. And, in an effort to make learning easier, schools or training programs must divorce themselves from the everyday problems of the work the recruit is being prepared for -- for actual work does not divide neatly into curriculum categories.

Several consequences of the formal schooling approach to organizational socialization follow. First, since teachers are necessarily removed and distant from the work situation, their knowledge may be faulty. Second, students, not knowing what is or is not relevant to the actual job, must learn all the curriculum presented. For example, in police training academies, recruits are taught fingerprinting, ballistics and other crime scene investigation techniques, which are of peripheral, if not questionable, merit on the jobs for which they are being prepared.

(Van Maanen, 1973). Third, the standardized procedures used to present the curriculum constrains anyone who could learn the material more efficiently were it presented in a different order. The student who needs more or less time than allotted will therefore be penalized. Finally, application and evaluation of what is learned will not be isomorphic to the actual work situation. Even in settings where much practice is allowed a recruit, this problem occurs. For instance, Woods (1972) suggests that the chief problem in barber colleges is preparing students to trim the hair of fussy, middle-aged patrons when the only available material for the students to test their skills upon in training are fifty to sixty year old, skid row drunks who keep falling asleep in the barber chair.

Informal, on-the-job preparation necessarily emphasizes specific skills and abilities. A person learns in places where people are doing whatever it is members of the organization normally do. The novice ironworker, for example, learns the trade where experienced tradesmen install beams and girders, rivet and weld them together, and place the rods for the pouring of reinforced concrete. Even if recruits in this context act as no more than a so-called "go-fer" by fetching materials, blueprints and coffee for the other workers, they are at least learning how to "run the iron" -- the critical but elegant skill of walking the dangerously thin steel beams set high above the city (Haas, 1970). By participating immediately in organizational activities, the recruit learns "where the action is" thus

perhaps minimizing the minimizable risks of training irrelevancies.

Teaching and learning are of course vulnerable to outside constraints under informal conditions. As suggested, since everyone already has a job to do, recruits do not have an agent's time guaranteed them. The brash and aggressive will learn more than the passive and quiet. This differs greatly from conventional formal programs where new material is presented to everyone at the agent's initiative -- when the recruits are thought to be ready. Yet, it is also the case that when an agent has no formal responsibility for the recruit's learning, the abuse or misuse of responsibility can not occur, although it is possible a recruit might not be taught anything.

Mistakes or errors made by a recruit in the informal socialization settings must be regarded, however, as more costly and serious than mistakes occurring in formal setting. Precisely because "real" work is interferred with in an informal situation, recruits may create for themselves a "bad reputation" which may follow them all of their days. The rookie policeman who for example, "freezes" while he and his partner attempt to settle a tavern brawl may well find himself ostracized from the inner circle of patrolmen. The forgetful apprentice beautician who provokes a customer by dyeing her hair the wrong color may be forced to look elsewhere for employment in order to complete a mandatory licensing requirement. Experienced members of the organization know fully well that "mistakes happen", but the

recruit is under a special pressure to perform well during an informal initiation period (or to at least ask first before acting). Indeed, the main drawback of informal socialization process often lies in the uncertainties of the task itself. Thus, steelworkers do not allow apprentices to do work that might endanger the safety of other workers. Briefs prepared by law students clerking in an office are carefully checked for possible errors. And, interns are limited severely in what they can or can not do in the hospital setting. In short, what one is able to learn on the job under the informal mode of socialization depends on contingencies often unrelated to the wishes of either the recruit or the agents of socialization.

2. Fixed (Variable Socialization) Processes:

Organizational socialization procedures differ in terms of the amount of certainty possessed by a recruit regarding his or her transition timetable. Some apprenticeship programs, for example, specify a maximum number of years that the newcomer must act as an apprentice, other programs specify a minimum. In fixed or determined situations, what Roth (1963) calls "standardized" systems, a person has a fairly precise knowledge of the end-points, midpoints, and other differentiated periods which will mark passage through the socialization process.

Educational processes provide perhaps the best example of the fixed socialization process. Schools begin and end at the same time for all pupils and individuals move through the system roughly one step at a time. Fixed socialization programs provide there-

fore for a rather rigid conception of "normal" progress such that those who are kept back or skip ahead are considered deviant.

Variable socialization processes provide no advance notice to those in the setting of the transition timetable. What may be true for one, is not true for another. A person remains at a particular level until those with authority decide otherwise. Such situations require the individual to actively search out clues to the future. Prisoners serving indeterminate sentences such as, for example, the legendary one-to-ten, must "dope out" timetable norms on their own (Irwin, 1970; Taylor and Cohen, 1972). However, as this example suggest, wherever the rates of passage across organizational boundaries are of deep concern to participants, a "sentimental order" will typically develop about when "such and such" should happen (Dornbush, 1955). Regardless of whether these expectations are accurate or inaccurate, recruits may very well measure their progress against them.

The vertically oriented administrative or managerial career is often a good example of a variable socialization process. The would-be executive must push hard to discover the signs of promotion. Thus, the recruit listens to stories about the time it takes one to advance in the organization, observes closely the experiences of others, develops an age-consciousness suggesting the range of proper age for given positions, and so on (Vanter, 1977). The process is judgemental and requires a good deal of time and effort. On the other hand, in some organizations such

as public service agencies, the timetable for promotions is rigidly set thus the recruit can rather quickly ascertain when career relevant events are to occur. However, in some instances fixed socializations sequences approximate the familiar case of "always a bridesmaid, never a bride." The timetable for the transitional pathway is clear enough, but for various reasons, the person can not or does not wish to complete the journey. Colleges and universities have their "professional students" who never seem to graduate as well as those who take seven or eight years to receive their "four year degree." Training programs have trainees who continually "mess up" and remain trainees indefinitely. Fixed process differ therefore with regard to both the frequency and rate of so-called role failures -- those persons who for some reason or another "don't make it."

Wheeler (1966) has suggested that in some organizational settings agents are allowed, if not encouraged, to get rid of role failures by firing or otherwise amputating them from the organization. In other settings, agents are required explicitly to keep their role failures but are allowed nonetheless to interrupt an individual's progress through the use of such mechanisms as flunking or recycling. Most organizations use both techniques thus the definition of role failure varies from the sharp and unmistakable to the vague and relative.

Roth (1963) suggests that a special category of "chronic sidetrack" may be created in some organizations for certain types

of role failures. In some police departments, for example, recruits unable to meet agent demands in the training academy or on-the-street often receive long-term assignments as city jailers or traffic controllers. Such assignments signal to the recruit and to others on the scene that the individual has left the normal transitional path to full-fledged membership in the organization. To the extent that such "Organizational Siberias" exist and are collectively viewed as such by those in the setting, chronic sidetracking is a possible socialization outcome. Yet, sidetracking is at times very subtle and problematic as in the case of young people in lower management positions who are unable to determine whether they have been left in the starting gate, or are, in fact, off and running.

Most organizations provide, at least theoretically, for role failures and exit. But the majority of organizations make infrequent use of the extreme remedy at their disposal (Porter and Steers, 1972; Price, 1977). Firing is a form of stigmatization few organizations apparently wish to visit upon employees. People are therefore "temporarily laid-off", "advised to take a long leave", "outplaced", or otherwise euphemistically eased out of their positions in ways similar to Coffman's (1952) "cooling out the mark". Indeed, in some situations, the treatment afforded an individual is accomplished with such grace that the person will not know what happened.

When tests and evaluations make enigmatic and variable what would otherwise be a fixed sequence, the recruit may well suffer

much anxiety. And tests often measure one's ability to cope or withstand stress and uncertainty more than they measure the person's skills or abilities. Needless to say, the more the individual's fate hangs in the balance of test results, the more anxiety created in the situation.

In general, recruits quickly seek to determine just how realistic role failure is in the socialization setting. Even in situations where testing is frequent, recruits may discover that "everybody gets through regardless". Thus, door-to-door sales trainees soon ascertain that classroom tests and exercises are of almost no importance compared to making their first sale (Shafer, 1974). Police recruits eventually learn that as long as they conform to the behavioral code of the police academy, there is little possibility of flunking out due to scholastic failure (Van Maanen, 1973). And students in various beauty colleges find that as long as they pay their fees on schedule no one really cares whether or not they "butcher" a job, except perhaps the client (Notkin, 1972). In any case, appearances are sometimes deceiving since the reality of the socialization process does not stalk about with a label. Recruits under most conditions are, however, good detectives, demystifying the demystifiable and making, for the time being at least, fixed socialization processes out of variable ones.

3. Collective (Individual) Socialization Processes:

The degree to which newcomers are processed as members of a group or individually is perhaps the most critical of the organizational socialization strategies. The difference is analogous to

the batch versus unit distinction made by industrial engineers. In a batch or mass production case, recruits are bunched together at the outset and processed collectively through a very similar set of experiences with the results being relatively uniform (Wheeler, 1966). In the unit or made-to-order case, recruits are processed individually through a more or less unique set of experiences with the results being relatively different.

Becker (1964) argues persuasively that when a cohort group experiences a socialization program together, the outcomes almost always reflect an "~~in-the-small~~" collective consciousness. Individual changes in perspective are built then upon an understanding of the problems faced by all participants. Becker (1964: 48) writes:

"As the group shares problems, various members experiment with possible solutions and report back to the group. In the course of collective discussions, the members arrive at a definition of their situation and develop consensus."

At the same time, the consensual character of solutions worked out by the group may also allow the recruits collectively to deviate more from the standards set by their agents than would be possible by an individual recruit acting alone. Collective patterns of socialization provide a potential base for organized resistance. Thus, the congruence between group solutions and managerial objectives is always problematic because the recruit group acting together is more likely than a recruit acting alone to ^{re-}define or ignore agent demands. The strength of group understandings depend of course upon the degree to which all members share the same fate. In highly competitive, win-lose settings

where group members know that their own success is increased via the failure of others, the social support network necessary to maintain recruit cohesion may break down. Consensual understandings will develop but they will buttress individual modes of adjustment. Young faculty members in publication-minded universities follow, for example, group standards, although such standards nearly always emphasize individual scholarship. The collective standard being, as it were, an individual one.

Critically, collective strategies of socialization may also promote and intensify agent demands. Thus, army recruits socialize one another in ways the army itself could never do or, for that matter, would never be allowed to do. Graduate students are often said to learn more from one another than from the faculty. While agents may have the power to define the nature of the collective problem, recruits often have more resources to provide the answers such as time, expertise, sympathy, coercion, or patience.

In many cases, collective socialization results in the formation of an almost separate subworld comprised solely of recruits. A cultural perspective complete with its own jargon, areas of discourse, and unique understandings may be developed and brought to bear upon common problems faced by the recruit group. The "stick-togetherness" that grows in such situations depends on the open sharing of experience or what Wenter (1968) calls "communion". Sharing similar difficulties and working out collective solutions

dramatize to a recruit the worth and usefulness of collegial ties for without the support and assistance of one's colleagues, the individual in transition would be lost. Without question, such lessons and relationships may serve recruits well in later stages of their organizational careers.

Individual strategies of socialization also require considerable adjustments on the part of the recruit. But the perspectives adopted by the person are not necessarily those most beneficial to one at the recruit level. Agent definitions are usually the only ones available. Certainly, the recruit may choose to not accept such definitions, although to reject them may well imply the severance of the individual from the organization. Furthermore, the rich, contextual perspectives available when individual's interact within a colleague group will not develop. In psychoanalysis, for example, the vocabulary of motives the patient (recruit) develops to interpret the situation is quite personal and specific. Of course such socialization techniques can and often do result in deep individual change -- referred to by Burke (1950) as "secular conversion" -- but they are lonely passages and success is dependent solely upon the mutual regard and warmth existing between the recruit and agent.

Apprenticeship modes of work socialization are sometimes similar to therapist-patient relationships. If the responsibility for transforming the new member to full-fledged status within the

organizations is delegated to only one person, an intense and rather value-oriented socialization process is likely to follow. This practice is common whenever a role incumbent is viewed by others in the setting as the only member capable of shaping the recruit. Caplow (1964) notes the prevalence of this practice in the upper-levels of bureaucratic systems and the lower-levels of craft and professional-based systems. Since the delegation of responsibility is to only one member, this person or agent must typically be viewed as a role model which the recruit is expected to emulate. Graduate schools, businesses and police departments all make extensive use of individualized socialization strategies. Outcomes in these one-in-one efforts are dependent upon the affective relationships which may or may not develop. In cases of high affect the process works well and the recruit is liable to quickly and fully internalize the values of the particular roles he or she is to play. However, when there are few effective bonds between agent and recruit, the process may not take, leading to inefficacious results. Although role skills may be easily learned by the recruit, his or her confirmation of full acceptance into the organization awaits the judgement of the agent as to the recruit's conformity to demands. Ultimately, there is little middle ground and the person either fails or succeeds.

Becker and Strauss (1956) use the notion of "sponsorship" to discuss this individual socialization tactic. Describing the

interdependence of careers within the organizations, they point out that during various sequences in a career, a person must be more concerned with satisfying the expectations of his or her sponsor than with satisfying personal expectations or the expectations of most others in the organization (though these may all be closely related). The ability of the individual to satisfy organizational demands also influences the sponsor's status in the organizational world. And, if the recruit is doing well, the sponsor's role as an agent of socialization may be minor and distant. However, if the recruit is doing poorly, the sponsor's role may well be a very active and salient one. Thus, while sponsorship is not without virtue to a recruit, it is not without danger to the sponsor who must "stick out his neck".

To close this section, individual socialization is usually an expensive organizational strategy both in time and effort. Failures cannot be easily rescued or recycled. Moreover, with industrialization and the related standardization processes which have accompanied the massive growth in size of organizations, the use of mass socialization techniques have increased. Collective methods, because of their ease, efficiency, and predictability, have tended to replace individual, one-on-one apprenticeship modes of socialization in the modern organization.

4. Sequential (Simple) Socialization Processes:

Sequential socialization refers to those transitional processes

hich are marked by an extended series of discrete, identifiable and cumulative stages through which an individual must pass in order to achieve a defined role and status within the organization. For example, persons being groomed for a particular managerial position may first be rotated across the various jobs that will comprise the range of managerial responsibility such as is the case in many banks. Similarly, police recruits in most departments must successively pass through such stages as academy classroom instruction, physical conditioning, firearm training, and on-the-street pupillage. Simple socialization processes are accomplished in only one transitional stage as is the case when a factory worker becomes a shop supervisor without benefit of an intermediary training program or a department head in a municipal government becomes a city manager without first serving as an assistant in that role. Presumably, any organizational role can be analyzed as to the immediate stages of preparation required of its incoming occupants.

When examining sequential strategies, it is crucial to note the degree to which each stage builds or expands upon the preceding stage. For example, the courses in most technical training programs are arranged in what is thought to be a simple-to-complex progression. On the other hand, some sequential processes seem to follow no internal logic and therefore, despite their outward appearance, come to resemble nothing more so than a random-like process. Management training is, for instance, quite often a

rather disjoint process with curriculum jumping from topic to topic with little or no integration across stages. In such cases, what is learned by recruits in the program is dependent simply upon what they like best in the sequence. If, however, the flow of topics or courses is harmonious and connected functionally in some fashion, the various minor alterations required of an individual at each stage will act cumulatively such that at the end, the person may find himself considerably different than he was when he started.

Relatedly, if several agents handle various portions of the socialization process, the degree to which the agents share common aims is altogether crucial to the eventual outcome. For example, in some Officers's Training Schools of peace time military organizations, the agents responsible for physical and weapon training tend to have very different perspectives about their jobs than those agents in charge of classroom instruction (Wamsley, 1972). Recruits quickly spot such conflicts when they exist and sometimes exploit them, playing agents off against one another. The result of such incongruities often lead to a more relaxed situation for the recruits, one in which they enjoy watching their instructors pay more attention to each other than they pay to the training program.

In an elaborate sequential arrangement, agents may also be unknown to one another, separated spatially, and (or) have

thoroughly different images of their task (Wheeler, 1966). Consider for example, the range of views about a particular job a recruit may receive from persons in the personnel department, people in the training division, colleagues on the job, and one's first supervisor, all of whom have a hand and a stake in the individual's movement through the socialization sequence. From this standpoint, empathy can certainly be extended to the so-called juvenile delinquent who receives "guidance" from the police, probation officers, judges, social workers, psychiatrists and correctional officials. Such a sequence suggests that a person may well learn to be whatever the immediate situation demands.

Beside the ambiguity of conflicting demands sometimes made upon individuals undergoing sequential socialization there is likely to be a strong bias in the presentation of each agent to make the next stage appear benign. In practice, recruits are often told that if they will just "buckle down and apply themselves" while in Stage A, Stages B, C, and D will be indeed easy. Agents usually mask -- wittingly or in some cases unwittingly -- the true nature of the stages to follow for if individuals feel that their future is bright and assured, they will be most cooperative in the present stage not wishing to jeopardize their expected rewards. To wit, consider the tactics of many high school mathematics teachers who tell their students that if they will just work hard in algebra, geometry will be a "cinch" (Lortie, 1975). Consider also Goffman's (1961b) observations of mental patients who, by the time they had

moved through the elaborate sequence of "therapeutic" stages in the hospital, had developed a large residue of mistrust toward their agents, the process itself akin to a "betrayal funnel".

When attempts are consistently made to make each step appear benign, the recruit's best source of information on the process is another person(s) who has gone through it. Whether designated by the organization as official agents or not, those who have previously (and recently) been through the sequence will have a great deal of influence in shaping recruit perspectives. Thus, some organizations go a long way attempting to isolate recruits from veteran members who represent perhaps wellsprings of factual data useful to the recruits. Certain profitmaking trade schools apparently go to great lengths in order to make sure their paying clientele do not know of the very limited job opportunities in, for example, the "glamorous, high-paying worlds" of radio and TV broadcasting, commercial art, or heavy equipment operation. Door-to-door sales trainees are continually assured that success is practically guaranteed, for the "handy-dandy, one-of-a-kind" product they are being schooled in merchandizing will sell itself (Shaffer, 1974). And, if recruits are to be allowed the privilege of interacting with more experienced members of the organization, agents will almost invariably select a veteran member who will present a positive, laundered image to the recruit, an image which conveys only the organizationally approved version of individual success.

Finally, the degree to which the individual is required to

continue through all stages is also an important feature of sequential socialization strategies. The recruit may feel, for example, he is being pushed or pressured into certain positions before he is ready. This is analytically similar to the business executive who does not want a promotion but feels that if he does not take it, his respective career will be damaged (Deckhard, 1977). On the other hand, of course, persons may be so busy preparing for the next step in the sequence that their performance so deteriorates at the immediate stage that the next step never materializes.

5. Homogeneous (Heterogeneous) Socialization Processes:

Socialization settings differ with regard to the demographic, biographic, and attitudinal dissimilarity among recruits. In some situations, the manifest problems presented in the setting will make individual backgrounds relatively unimportant, submerging individual differences in the pursuit of answers to common problems. More likely, however, differences among recruits will represent latent sources of conflict and implicit grounds for informal social organization -- cliques, coalitions, and cabals.

To the degree that recruit groups are homogeneous, the greater the probability that a single perspective will come to dominate the group (Newcombe, 1958; Cartwright and Zander (eds.), 1960). When groups are heterogeneous, recruits utilize social typing categories that make visible -- to recruits at least -- the boundaries of subgroups. If these social types are ephemeral to the immediate

problems faced by all recruits, the tuning may simply represent a recognized, but marginal, feature of the socialization process. Yet individual differences may result in internal dissension when they are relevant to the situation at hand. Consequently, in some organizational training programs where whites outnumber blacks, race may well be a major grouping factor, for the socialization problems will be different among the the majority and minority groups -- e.g., black trainees may have to devote more energy to locating role models and sources of reliable information within the social structure than whites simply because there are few other blacks in the organization.

Attitudinal characteristics are also relevant here. For example, the distinction between locals and cosmopolitans first postulated by Merton (1957) bears on those situations in which the reference groups held by various participants in an organization are incompatible. Locals are those persons rooted in the immediate organization and derive their perspective from what they take to be the organization's interest. On the other hand, cosmopolitans derive their perspective from a wider audience, reflected perhaps by a professional association cutting across organizations. Locals are sometimes suspected by the cosmopolitans as being "more company men"; whereas cosmopolitans are suspected by the locals to be "disloyal". Each to the other is at odds with the appropriate motivational base in the organization.

Homogeneity, whether it is demographic, biographic or attitudinal, is in fact one of the most crucial variables in any socialization process. For instance, Dalton (1959) suggests that progress up the organizationally-defined ladder of success is more often than not dependent upon a person's possession of the "right characteristics" -- e.g., religion, race, age and background. Along these same lines, Veblen (1953), Mills (1956) and Whyte (1956) have all argued that organizational selection and promotion devices are biased in the direction that those people who demonstrate "conforming" traits are preferred to those who do not. To a greater or lesser degree, then, organizations typically seek to recruit and reward homogeneity. Presumably, such homogeneous populations will be more amenable to organizational influence.

6. Serial (Disjunctive) Socialization Processes:

The serial mode of organizational socialization whereby experienced members groom newcomers about to assume similar roles in an organization is perhaps the best guarantee that the organization itself will not change over time. In the police world, the serial feature of recruit socialization is virtually taken for granted and accounts in large measure for the remarkable inter-generational stability among patrolmen (Westley, 1970; Rubenstein, 1972; Muir, 1977). To question this almost sacrosanct mechanism of police training is tantamount to heresy (Van Maanen, 1973). Innovation in serial modes is unlikely, but continuity and a sense of tradition will be maintained, even in the face

of a turbulent and changing environment.

If, however, a person is not following in the footsteps of his predecessor, the socialization pattern can be labelled disjunctive. Whereas the serial pattern risks stagnation and contamination, the disjunctive pattern risks confusion and complication. The recruit who is left to his own devices may rely on definitions cleared from inappropriate others. But, the disjunctive pattern also creates the opportunity for a recruit to be innovative and original. Without an old guard about to hamper the development of new perspective, the conformity and lockstep pressures created by the serial mode are absent. Entrepreneurs automatically fall into a disjunctive mode of socialization, as do those who fill newly created positions in organizations. In both cases, there are few people, if any, available to the individual who have had similar experiences and could therefore coach the newcomer in light of the lessons they have learned.

Sometimes what appears to be a serial pattern is actually a disjunctive one. To illustrate, recruits may be prepared inadequately for spots in one department by agents coming from another department. This is often the case when the personnel department handles all aspects of training. It is only later, after the newcomers have access to others who have been through the same process that they discover the worthlessness and banality of their training (Van Maanen, 1976). Agent familiarity with the target position is a crucial factor in the serial strategy.

Occasionally, what could be labelled "gapping" presents a serious socialization problem. Gapping refers to the distance -- social, temporal or otherwise -- between recruit and agent. For example, a recruit has the greatest opportunity for collecting data about his career from those with whom he works. But the experiences of those with whom he works may be quite removed from his own circumstances. When newcomers hear others tell of being promoted within a month or two after starting, recruits may well wonder what is wrong when they are still working the same job five or six months later. They may think this a reflection on their own competence. And, needless to say, it is important to consider what the more experienced employees think of their younger counterpart who has not been promoted. Roth (1963) notes that if this were simply a matter of contrast between the twenty-year veteran and the recruit, the differences could be readily reconciled. However, in many organizations, pathways and opportunities are constantly changing thus creating minor to major gaps in the knowledge separating a recruit from others in the organization.

It is generally true that recruits representing the first class will set the tone for the classes to follow (Merton, 1957). It is not suggested that those following are pacted seriatim, but simply that for those to come, it is easier to learn from the others already on hand than it is to learn on their own as orgi-

nators. As long as there are others available in the socialization setting whom newcomers consider to be "like them", these others will act as guides, passing on consensual solutions to typical problems. In industrial settings, for example, where worker satisfaction is low, serial patterns of socialization maintain, if not amplify, the situation (Van Maanen and Schein, 1970). Serial modes therefore create something analogous to Margaret Mead's (1950) notion of a post-figurative culture. Just as children in stable societies are able to gain a sure sense of the future by seeing in their parents and grandparents an image of themselves grown older, employees in organizations can gain a sense of the future by seeing in their coaches, agents or sponsors an image of themselves further out in the organization. A danger exists, of course, in that the image itself will not be particularly flattering or desirable from the standpoint of the recruit and the person will leave the organization if able, rather than face what seems to be an agonizing future. Thus, the serial pattern, even from the eyes of the agent, is likely to be undesirable when things are going poorly.

The analytic distinction between serial and disjunctive socialization is sometimes brought into sharp focus when an organization undertakes a "house cleaning" whereby old members are swept out and new members brought in to replace them. In extreme cases, an entire organization can be thrown into a disjunctive mode of socialization. It is also true that occasionally the persons presumably being socialized have more experience and knowledge of the work situation than do those who are to socialize

them. For example, in colleges where faculty members are constantly entering and exiting, long term students and veteran staff members exert much control over the organization. Certainly in organizations such as prisons and mental hospitals, recruit turnover is often less frequent than staff turnover. In these organizations, it is not surprising that they are often literally run by the inmates. Similarly, in many work organizations, a person who must be exceptionally good to be, say, a project director at age 25, must be exceptionally mediocre to still be in that same position at age 50 or 55. Because of such circumstances, the age-graded stereotype of the youthful, naive, and passive junior member who is being coached wisely by a mature, informed, and still active agent is frequently false. The process may have been designed as a serial one, but, to a canny recruit, the process is disjunctive for the person may be unwilling to take the agent(s) of socialization seriously.

7. Open (Closed) Socialization Processes:

When entering an organization, a recruit is frequently a part of a larger group that can be described analytically as relatively open or closed (Ziller, 1965). In open socialization processes, the assignment of a recruit is made to a group which is in a continual state of membership flux. In such situations, individuals typically recognize the transitory nature of their group member-

ship and can be expected to act, naturally enough, in rather self-oriented ways. To the contrary, closed socialization process involve a newcomer within a relatively long standing and permanent group. Transfer rates in and out of the group are low and an extended time perspective prevails. As such, the group usually has developed (or is developing) elaborate rituals and tests through which the newcomer must pass if he or she is to become integrated within that group. Closed socialization strategies then involve the individual with the common life and purpose of a distinct and long-standing group within the organization.

Both psychologically and sociologically, the differences in behavior between open and closed groups are often striking (Ziller, 1976). For example, the helping relationships that unfold to assist a recruit are likely to be much more pronounced if the socialization process is closed than if it is open. In closed socialization processes, a recruit is more likely as well to encounter group goals that are only vaguely formulated since specific goals may well threaten a permanent group's reason for existence (Parsons, 1960). Furthermore, the newcomer's attachment to the group, rather than the organization, must be demonstrated. In closed processes, questions concerning the newcomer's commitment to the group, his involvement in matters peripheral to the group's concern, and, critically, his loyalty to other group members are sure to be raised. For example, police recruits, upon entering a squad in the patrol division, undergo

a most closed process of socialization. They are tested repeatedly and closely as to their prudence, their trustworthiness, and their willingness to share the risks of police work (Van Maanen, 1974). Officers from other squads are told explicitly to not interfere and even supervisors maintain something of a hands-off approach toward the new recruit. For the newcomer, it is a very demanding and critical period. If he passes the acid tests and demonstrates his concern for other squad members, he is accepted as part of the team. If he does not pass, he may well be eliminated from the organization altogether. Closed socialization processes are therefore analytically similar to Bakke's (1960) fusion process in which an individual's self-concept becomes inextricably tied to the self-concepts of others.

Open socialization processes often produce very different results. Loyalty is presumably less an issue to group members than is competence. Juries, project teams, ad hoc committees, and so forth represent typical open socialization settings. Social relationships among colleagues may be somewhat strained since the necessity to maintain good ones is lessened by virtue of the short-run nature of the group. There are some advantages to this mode however. An interesting study is reported by Torrance (1955) who examined the decision-making abilities of individuals undergoing both open and closed socialization. He investigated aircrews who had trained together. After training, some crews were scrambled (open socialization) whereas other crews remained intact (closed

socialization). To Torrance's surprise, the scrambled crews were far superior on the performance of various task-related problems than were the intact crews. Interpreting these results, he concluded that the relative lack of power differentials and social status among the scrambled groups allowed for a more open and honest consideration of alternative solutions to the problems facing the group than would be possible when power and status were established and relatively fixed as was the case for the intact crews. Janis (1972) has reported some very similar findings more recently.

Different techniques of handling conflict might also be expected to develop between individuals undergoing either closed or open socialization. In the former case, aggression and withdrawal may well be more popular tactics since they are relatively easy to apply, reliable in their effects, and, since the group is in constant flux, unlikely to have any long range consequences for the individual. In the latter case, negotiation, mediation, and perhaps subtle dissimulation tactics are more likely to be utilized since members know quite well that they will have to continue to work together on a day-to-day basis for some time to come. In open processes, winning and losing on an immediate issue may be paramount to the individuals involved. Thus, conciliation and compromise are unlikely. In closed processes, winning and losing on an immediate issue must be seen by the individual in perspective. Long-term adjustments emphasizing conciliation and compromise must occur since individuals will sooner or later learn

that to win on some issues, they must give in or perhaps lose on others.

Finally, in open socialization processes, the advent of a newcomer is an everyday event and the person is unlikely to be afforded any special treatment. However, in closed processes, the advent of a newcomer is a unique occurrence and is likely to reorient the relative positions of all group members to one another. The new child in a family or new member of a gang are particularly good examples here. The past is quite distinguishable from the present in closed processes for the newcomer represents the forces of change. Closed socialization produces therefore episodes or periods of change rather than stability per se. Similarly, the loss of a member may produce change. Here, the death of a close family member serves as a most poignant example. What is particularly the case in closed socialization processes is the necessity to view changes in the group's perspective as being bunched around the periods in which individuals enter and exit the group. As many administrators have learned through hard experience, there is often no better way to "shake-up" a long standing group than to bring a critical number of new members in while transferring old members out. What was once a closed socialization process becomes an open one -- at least for a time.

Social Identity and Work Socialization

Perhaps in times past, the notion of work and the work career could be dismissed, taken-for-granted as an irrevocable feature of everyday life, a perfectly predictable outcome of one's position in the traditional order of things. Whether peasant, artisan, or aristocrat, one's life work was for the most part determined by the accident of birth. An individual imposed little separation among various pursuits because one's station in life was the fundamental reality around which family, work, and social activities were organized. In Berger's (1964) analysis, the many social roles a person played in traditional society were fused together and work, in such a context, is redundant to one's more or less fixed location in society, an issue therefore of relatively little concern to an individual.

The concept of Gemeinschaft as utilized by the early sociologists captures that non-problematic sense of work nicely.¹⁴ In Gemeinschaft society, the individual is fully incorporated or integrated within a social network that by and large defines who one is, what one is to do, how one is to do it, and what one is to become. The development of individualism is minimal. Relationships among people, whether based upon kinship, neighborhood, or friendship, are characterized by shared sentiments, values, and

beliefs. Experiences in the work sphere of a person's life cannot easily be split from experiences in the non-work spheres for there is an absence of an institutional differentiation between the two. The community embraces its members such that all activity rests upon convention and agreement. Thus the notion of an individual choosing certain work is essentially alien to the Gemeinschaft world.

It is only with the coming of relationships based on individual exchange and calculation rather than mutual trust and shared knowledge that the concept of work becomes problematic to a person. This shift in social relationships is associated with the momentous historical transition of 18th and 19th century Western society from its communal and medieval character to its present competitive and industrial form. In place of the old Gemeinschaft orientation of the workman to his work, upon which Nisbet (1967) remarked "the person gives himself limitlessly to his job without calculation of its time or compensation," there arises the Gesellschaft orientation in which the workman strives primarily for his own advantage. Individualism is highly developed and work, in modern society, can be approached in an instrumental and segmental manner for it is separable in theory and in practice from other sphere's of life.

This transformation represents an impressive victory for rationalism. No longer is the world a place where the present is indistinguishable from the past. Volunteristic beliefs replace

deterministic ones and we see ourselves making choices that affect the course of our lives. In the world of work, for example, the ever expanding list of job titles suggests to the individual that career possibilities abound. Indeed, few children these days enter the occupations of their parents. In a world thus disenchanted, the person in theory can master all things. A planned career is therefore possible for the choices we make in the present can be seen to have recognizable, if probabilistic, consequences in the future.

Granted that rationalism, individualism, and voluntarism are virtually taken-for-granted features of present day Western societies, the preceding review of socialization strategies suggests that many work organizations nonetheless go to great lengths to influence the thought and action of their new members. Moreover, it is generally agreed that contemporary socialization practices have become less uniform and powerful within the family, the church, the school, and the community. As such, a person's sense of selfhood may becoming more closely tied to the organizations in which they work than ever before. Thus, despite the social segmentation of modern life into work and non-work spheres, it would be foolish to suppose that organizational socialization practices have little psychological effect on a person simply because they fall outside of the traditional locales of social influence.¹⁵

In this section, I lump together various self-referential concepts such as self-image, self-esteem, and self-concept into

the broader concept of social identity and argue that under certain conditions one's social identity becomes tied to the work role he or she performs such that the role itself becomes something the person rather fully embraces, supports, and seeks to affirm in all its sterling detail (Goffman, 1959).

The claiming of a social identity based on one's work role involves behavior that falls conceptually somewhere between what is conventionally defined as individual or personality-based behavior and formal or functional role-based behavior. In short, the notion of social identity allows one to make relatively fine-grained distinctions among people who fill the same functional role yet stops short of requiring the sort of depth psychology approach to personal character wherein the role vanishes from view and only idiosyncratic aspects of the person's character remain.

Taking as a whole the arguments presented in the previous sections of this chapter, it is clear that certain forms of socialization are far more likely than other forms to provide recruits with encompassing situational definitions and perspectives for their work role such that their social identity changes rather dramatically upon being processed into a work organization. For example, I suggested that collective strategies are more powerful than individual strategies at promoting a sense of mutual trust, dependence, and similarity among the membership of an organization. Or, similarly, I suggested that formal strategies

are more likely to influence one's beliefs, attitudes, and values than informal strategies which tend to operate -- in the short run at least -- on the skill levels achieved by recruits.

A useful way of summarizing the materials presented is then to consider, as a unit, those strategies which tend to dismantle a recruit's social identity such that it can be rebuilt in an organizationally approved fashion and, conversely, to consider those strategies which tend to confirm a recruit's incoming social identity thus ratifying the worth and function of the entering characteristics presented by the person. The former set of strategies can be called a divestiture system and, in the extreme case, it includes the formal, variable, collective, sequential, homogeneous, serial, and closed strategies of socialization. The latter set of strategies can be called an investiture system and, again in the extreme case, it includes the informal, fixed, individual, simple, heterogeneous, disjunctive, and open strategies of socialization.

Ordinarily, the degree to which entrance into an organization resembles an ordeal to a recruit indicates the degree to which a divestiture system is present. Such a system is set up to deny and strip away certain entering characteristics carried by a recruit. To wit, many organizations virtually require a new member to sever old friendships, undergo extensive harassment from experienced members, alter outward appearances and demeanor, and engage, for long periods of time, in what veteran members of the organization

often call "shit work" or "dirty work". During this period, if endured demurely, willingly, and with a certain amount of forbearance, poise and good humor, the newcomer gradually acquires the official and unofficial credentials of full membership. Printers (Lipset et al., 1956), railwaymen (Salaman, 1974), jazz musicians (Becker, 1953), policemen (Van Maanen, 1973), psychiatrists (Light, 1980), management trainees (Dalton, 1959), hockey players (Faulkner, 1974), and some schoolteachers (Lortie, 1975) all had to suffer considerable indignation, mortification, and humiliation in order to "pay their dues" such that they could become equal and accepted participants in their respective organizations.

Goffman's (1961) "total institutions" are commonly thought prototypical in this regard. But, it is important to note that even in total institutions, initiation rites and the ordeals of passage may well have differential meaning to recruits. In this sense, Goffman and others have perhaps been overimpressed with the degree of profanation of the self that occurs with institutionalization. Even in the harshest of settings like prisons and mental hospitals, many recruits have been through the entry procedures so frequently that they are undergone matter-of-factly, with little or no change in the social identity of the person. A self-proclaimed thief in prison, for example, seems to be in an investiture system more so than in a divestiture one since it appears that one's pre-institutional identity can be sustained with ease in such settings. Prison, in these cases, represents simply

an annoying interval to the person in an otherwise orderly career. From the thief's perspective, prison socialization follows an informal, individual, fixed, simple, heterogeneous, and open pattern. And, while there are no doubt serial elements to the incarceration experiences, such serial socialization most often supports rather than contradicts the social identity brought by the person to the organization. In short, at least for repeat offenders, prison life is typically a confirming experience, not a disconfirming one.

Though close inspection is always required, it is still the case that many organizations do construct divestiture systems designed primarily to make the recruit over into whatever those in the setting deem appropriate.¹⁶ In extreme situations, recruits are isolated from former associates, must abstain from certain types of behavior, publically degrade themselves and others, follow a rigid set of sanctioned rules and regulations, and, in general, "toe the line" in a very closely monitored and regimented fashion. This process, when voluntarily undergone, serves to commit and bind the person to the organization. The sacrifice and surrender involved is premised, of course, upon a sort of "institutional awe" carried by a recruit when passing through such a systematic ordeal. Within this society, there are many familiar illustrations: the Marine Corps, organized crime, fraternal orders, the priesthood, religious cults, college teaching, elite law schools and other forms of professional training, off-shore

fishing occupations, professional athletics, self-realization groups, apprenticeship in certain trades, and so on. All of these activities require the recruit to pass through a series of robust tests in order to gain privileged access to the organization within which the work one learns is performed.¹⁷

In general, simply the endurance of an ordeal promotes a strong fellowship and sense of shared social identity among those who have traversed the same path to membership. Such experiences provide the newcomer with the prized reward of membership and a set of ready-made colleagues that dramatize for the recruit the worth of such a reward. Those who endure the system and pass the tests imposed by the agents symbolize to others on the scene that they are committed fully to the organization and the gap separating recruits from members narrows appreciably while the gap separating recruits and members from non-members grows. To Simmel (1950), the ordeal serves as the sacramental rites-of-passage in an invisible but secular church.

An investiture system, on the other hand, conveys the message to the recruit that "the organization likes you as you are, don't change." Entrance is made as smooth and trouble free as possible. Those already in the setting go to great lengths to insure the recruit's needs are met. Demands made on the person are balanced to avoid being unreasonable. The elaborate

rituals involved in breaking-in top management personnel or professional specialists within industrial organizations are cases in point. And, in times of labor scarcity, positions on the bottom rung of organizational ladders are filled with a concern for employee desires. Brief orientation programs, career counseling, relocation assistance, and even a visit to the president's office with the prefatory handshake and good wishes systematically suggest to newcomers that they are valuable as they are -- that the organization has both figuratively and literally invested in them. Of course, rude awakenings may be waiting in the wings, but, at least at entrance, the socialization strategies employed by the organization may have been experienced by the recruit as mildly euphoric. As such, the recruit's social identity is merely strengthened and perhaps embellished, but not altered.

Clearly, divestiture rather than investiture systems are more likely to produce conforming results among recruits. In and of itself, however, this result may be commendable since standardization or conformity per se must be thought of, in many instances, as highly functional. From a work standpoint, conforming airline pilots, heart surgeons, car mechanics, and public accountants are clearly desirable, at least insofar as their performance on the job is concerned. It is true of course that psychologically the extent to which the role becomes an all encompassing social identity may be seen as problematic. But, nonetheless, conformity on the job may well be both organizationally and socially valuable. Moreover, it must also be

remembered that divestiture systems bestow an identity upon a person as well as destroy one. From this perspective, coercion is not necessarily an evil assault on a person since it can also be seen as a device for stimulating positively evaluated changes on the part of the individual. What has always been difficult with coercion is the possibility for perversion that it involves not its obvious capacity for stimulating change. Indeed, there is a time-honored tradition for people to impose coercive circumstances upon themselves in the hope of creating interesting and enriching results (e.g., setting deadlines, making contracts, forcing one's self to try something new). In sum, to the individual, it is only by clearing away the former self that it is possible to become something else -- a soldier (or revolutionary), an expert (or student), an entrepreneur (or employee), a master (or apprentice), a policeman (or criminal).

Closing Comments

I have attempted to provide in this essay a partial framework for analyzing some of the more pervasive strategies used by organizations for controlling and directing the work perspectives and behavior of their members. Obviously, there are other strategies that could have been discussed. For instance, the tightness or looseness of day-to-day supervision could be depicted as a socialization strategy (Argyris, 1964).

So too could the degree of competitiveness sponsored by the organization among its recruits (Rosenbaum, 1979). What I have tried to do here however is describe these processes that because of their generality are typically ^{ignored by} organizational researchers and ~~taken-for-granted~~ by organizational decision-makers.

It is true of course that the individual entering an organization does not represent a human version of the tabula rosa, merely waiting patiently for the organization to do its work. Certainly some people play very active roles in their own socialization and insofar as this is the case, such dynamics have been largely ignored in this analysis. Thus, each strategy discussed here contains only the possibility, not the actuality, of effect. For example, individuals undergoing collective socialization may withdraw from the situation, abstaining from the group life that surrounds other recruits. Or, some people may pass through a tightly closed socialization process with a calculated indifference and stoic nonchalance relative to others in the group of which they are nominally a member. A few exceptions are probably the rule in even the most tyrannical of settings.

However, the preponderance of evidence presented here suggests that certain organizational socialization processes can and do play very powerful roles in influencing recruit conceptions of their work roles and social identities. By teasing out the structural elements which, by and large, define any organizational passage, it is apparent that for the most persons

a given set of experiences in the organization will lead to rather predictable ends. The point I wish to reemphasize here is simply that much control over individual behavior in organizations is a direct result of the manner in which people are processed into and through the organization. By directing attention to the breakpoints or transitions in a person's work career, particularly the early stages of the career where relatively more learning takes place than at later stages, much is to be gained in terms of understanding how organizations shape the performances and ambitions of their members.

To researchers, therefore, I hope this chapter stimulates more interest in the direct strategies of people processing than has heretofore been the case. This may be a matter of some urgency, for, as Elau and Schoenherr (1971) and Perrow (1972) have argued recently, the trend in modern organizations is apparently one of decreasing control through traditional means such as direct supervision or the immediate application of rewards and punishments and increasing the control over organizational members by using indirect means such as recruitment, selection, training, and career path manipulation. To these remote control mechanisms, one might add the socialization strategies described in this paper and the overarching investiture or divestiture systems in which they seem to be embedded.

More generally, to members of organizations, I hope this chapter promotes a degree of insight into the various social-

ization strategies such that some self-initiated organizational analysis will be undertaken. Since many of the strategies for "breaking in" employees to various roles lie beneath the surface of organizational life, they are rarely discussed or considered to be matters of choice when decisions are made about how to bring in new members. Those strategies that do get considered often are left unchanged simply because their effects are not well understood. Other strategies, even when their effects are understood, are frequently justified by the traditional illogic of "I-had-to-do-it-that-way-and-by-god-so-are-the-people-that-follow-me." Yet, as I have attempted to show, socialization processes are not products of some fixed, evolutionary pattern, they are cultural artifacts crafted from human invention and can therefore be changed.

Notes

1. This is a critical point for the analytical thrust of this chapter is distinctly sociological, not psychological. While it is altogether true that people differ greatly in their response to influence attempts, the study of socialization must first be concerned with the forms in which socialization appears rather than individual reactions to these forms. Certainly both must be studied but, in my view, far too much attention has been directed toward the individual differences which characterize the results of socialization and far too little attention has been placed on the common and general features of the process itself. There are of course knotty theoretical and epistemological problems raised by an approach that by and large ignores the phenomenological reality of social, structural, and cultural properties as described analytically. But, as I hope to display in this chapter, the risks are well worth running when, if by ignoring for the moment particularistic person-based complications, certain underlying definitional features of socialization can be identified. I have, however, considered some of the phenomenological questions surrounding the varieties of adult socialization elsewhere (Van Maanen, 1977a; 1979b) and there is a brief section of this chapter that treats some of these issues in an introductory way ("On learning to Work").

2. Certainly, in many work situations, the entry level job taken by an individual represents a sort of terminal career node also. Coal miners, garbage collectors, secretaries, janitors, and, to a somewhat lesser degree, schoolteachers, policemen, and social workers enter jobs at a level from which hierarchical advancement is not the norm. To a degree then these jobs represent a most limited career. Yet, there almost always exists the possibility of achieving, from the individual's perspective, a better assignment, freedom from close supervision, higher pay with seniority, some form of tenure, increasing recognition for a job well done, and perhaps a more central role in the organization itself. For a useful model of the career that recognizes movement across the inclusionary or social boundaries of an organization as well as movement across the functional and hierarchical ones, see Schein, 1968; 1971.
3. There are many studies from both a psychological and sociological perspective that indicate a person's early organizational experiences are a major determinant of one's later organizationally relevant beliefs, attitudes, and actions (e.g., Becker and Strauss, 1956; Hughes, 1958; Schein, 1961; 1962; Roth, 1963; Glaser, 1964; Berlew and Hall, 1966; Brim, 1966; Wheeler, 1966; Manning, 1970; Vroom and Deci, 1971; Becker, 1972; Lortie, 1975; Bell and Price, 1975; Feldman, 1976; Van Maanen, 1976; Fucher and Stelling, 1977; Mortimer and Simmons, 1978). Although I do not try to summarize these studies

in this chapter in any more than a cursory way, the most general conclusion stemming from these studies is simply: "first impressions are lasting."

4. There are essentially three general sources of anxiety associated with individual transitions. First, there are cultural anxieties created whenever a person is separated from an everyday social situation with which he or she has become intimately familiar. Second, psychological tensions are promoted with a new role as well as the performance anxieties a person may have when taking on new duties. Third, and perhaps of most importance to the discussion here, sociological stress results when a person feels a lack of identification with the activities of others immediately surrounding one. See Van Maanen (1977a) for a more extended view of these factors from the perspective of the individual undergoing socialization.
5. The view of social action in this chapter is based primarily upon Mead's social psychology and is expressed most succinctly by the symbolic interactionists such as Blumer (1969), Hughes (1971), and Becker (1971). Social and personal changes with this framework always requires the analytic occasion of surprise for surprise prompts, if only temporarily, a kind of disengagement from the concerns of the moment and makes possible the apprehension of those concerns not previously noticed. Becker's (1964) classic essay and Strauss's (1959) monograph provide a crisp introduc-

tion to the topic of personal change in adult life as handled by the symbolic interactionists.

6. Only a brief treatment of the "sociotemporal" properties of situational definitions is presented in the text. For a considerably more extensive treatment of this the content side of socialization, see Van Maanen, 1977a; 1979a,b. The view presented here (and elsewhere) owes much to the work of Mead, 1932.
7. Cognitive anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists have all made imaginative uses of the notion of mental maps. See, for example, Tolman, 1948; Kelley, 1955; Gould and White, 1974; and Cicourel, 1975.
8. The "normalization" aspect of recruit socialization refers to the grasp a recruit comes to possess of the everyday standards and typifications used by others in the workplace to guide their actions. For example, learning what constitutes "real work" as opposed to what is considered cosmetic or peripheral work in the organization as well as the labels and argot used by others to refer to people and objects encountered frequently in the course of a workday are significant dimensions of the "normalization" process. For an enlightening empirical and theoretical approach to an individual's development of a situational definition, see, Mc Hugh (1968). Many of the ideas that inform my discussion in the text were gleaned from Mc Hugh's

careful treatment of the topic.

9. To come to know an organizational situation and act within it implies that the person has developed some commonsensical beliefs, principles, and understandings of that situation. In the shorthand notation used in the text, a "perspective" is developed for interpreting the experiences one undergoes when participating in a given sphere of the work world. As used in this chapter, a "perspective" is merely a broader version of the more specific and focused concept, "situational definition." A description of the meaning sociologists attach to the twin terms situational definition and perspective can be found in Van Maanen (1979b). See also Shibutani's (1962) seminal remarks on shared meaning systems.
10. The number of factors influencing the outcome of any organizational socialization process upon a specified individual is no doubt quite large. Aside from the factors directly considered in this chapter, individual responses will perhaps vary by : type of organization (Glaser (ed.), 1969); career stage (Van Maanen, 1977b); career anchor (Schein, 1975); occupational task requirements (Greer (ed.), 1972); underlying occupational discipline (Schein, 1972); the individual's involvement in the work career (Dailyn, 1977); and so forth. All of these personal and contextual factors deserve intensive study of course but to systematically link these situational and individual factors to socialization practices requires that one can first characterize the more pervasive forms of organizational socialization itself.

11. A nearly and rather brief statement on the strategies of organizational socialization is located in Van Maanen and Schein (1976) and in Van Maanen (1978b). A later and more extensive treatment is given in Van Maanen and Schein (1979). Much of the material presented in this section has ~~been~~ excerpted, edited, culled, and otherwise drawn from this previous work.
12. Of course the length of the formal process is an important moderating factor in this regard. The longer the formal process, the more culture that is usually transmitted to the recruit. Thus, the greater the probability that a recruit will internalize the organizationally desired values, motives, and beliefs. I should note too that many organizations "farm out" this formal preparation phase to various educational institutions. Professional schools, for example, often handle much of the formal socialization demands of some types of organizations.
13. Since these sorts of deviations are, by and large, expected in many organizations, it hardly seems reasonable to refer to the many rule breakers as "deviants," or, in terms coined elsewhere, "inefficaciously socialized" (Van Maanen, 1976). To the contrary, these examples illustrate a rather important principle: When "deviations" are frequently made by a large percentage of organizational members, they somehow become transformed into normal aspects of the system, aspects that the recruit is somehow expected by others on the scene to learn.

Thus, when many people do the wrong thing (normatively speaking), this thing becomes right (practically speaking).

14. The Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft conception of historical processes is attributed to Tönnies (1955). Unlike Marx, Tönnies saw changes in the form of economic production as a result, not a cause, of the move in social relationships described in the text (although otherwise their views are quite similar). Tönnies typology is also very close to Durkheim's (1933) later notion of an evolutionary transformation from the "mechanical solidarity" of medieval society to the "organic solidarity" of present day society. More recently, Berger's (1964) discussion of the meaning of work in sacred (traditional) and secular (modern) societies conveys many of the same points. Even Plesman's (1959) often quoted distinction between inner- and other-directed man has much the same flavor as Tönnies' masterful twin concepts. For a good discussion of these concepts, see Salaman, 1974.
15. The view taken here is simply that while one's sense of self may be the person's most cherished individual possession, the origins and maintenance of such beliefs are located in the social circles in which one moves. This view is presented most forceably by Coffman (1959) and is elaborated upon in Van Maanen (1979b).
16. The degree to which such divestiture systems fulfill the

manifest, latent, or unintended objectives of those who designed the system is an open and interesting question in its own right though it is a question that because of space limitations can not be addressed adequately in this chapter. I will suggest however that it seems on occasion that certain socialization strategies which promote peculiar ends develop without the conscious intent of organizational decision makers. For example, the notion that prisons socialize first offenders into a life of crime is a rather popular if disturbing one and one that has considerable basis in fact. But surely prisons were not designed to be schools of crime; yet that is their result (Light, 1979).

17. Risk, danger, and uncertainty seem to characterize many of the tasks performed by members of organizations noted for their ordeal-like entry procedures. Salaman (1974) argues, for instance, that something akin to an "organizational embrace," binding the membership to one another through a common sense of purpose and identity, grows from the collective performances of a potentially dangerous task which is deemed morally significant. An example of just such a process is given in Miller and Van Maanen (1979) when examining the social organization of commercial fishing.

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